

45<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology  
Southern California and Hawai'i Chapter (SEMSCHC)

**MUSIC IN NEW CONTEXTS**  
*Transformations, Continuities, Challenges*

February 19-20, 2011

Azusa Pacific University School of Music

ABSTRACTS

---

**Supeena Insee Adler (UC Riverside): Gender, sexual orientation, and musical innovation in Thai music society: The case of Saharat Janchaleum**

Abstract:

This paper will examine the work of gay Thai musician Khruu Saharat Chanchaleum, who composes and performs his musical compositions in a Thai traditional social context. His compositions exhibit strong tensions between tradition and innovation and are characterized as “off limits” by many people, including his own teacher. Traditionally, only famous male elder teachers of high status have the authority to compose new pieces in the tradition. Khruu Saharat breaks this tradition by composing while still young and becoming well-known. He also takes advantage of contemporary media to promote his musical identity in contrast to other traditional musicians who closely guard their knowledge. He identifies himself as a gay man who plays jakhee, and he says he composes by drawing on two modes of thought, male and female. Khruu Saharat says that few women can play with the strength that he has and many men cannot play as softly as he does—that is, he combines male and female qualities when playing the jakhee. I will draw on Peter A. Jackson’s notion of psychological hermaphroditism to explain Thai understandings of how homosexuality affects aesthetics.

While gay musicians are far from new in Thai traditional music society, presenting new ways of

performing and composing Thai music from a gay perspective is still very unusual. I will focus on Khruu Saharat's unique performance skills, and his arrangement of traditional works with Western orchestral accompaniment, and will suggest that Khruu Saharat's gay identity allows him to innovate in an otherwise conservative tradition.

**Kathryn Alexander (UC Riverside): Vanished Music Scenes: Social Networking Sites as Tools of Historical Ethnomusicology**

Abstract:

Historical ethnomusicologists face the challenge of interacting with temporally distant communities. How might researchers conduct ethnographies of musical communities that no longer exist, whose members have dispersed? Former sites of musical scene-making, both private and public spaces, serve new functions or no longer exist. Many ethnographies investigate extant scenes; a historical ethnography must seek out former participants, who are removed by time and space from events. This situation may alter their perceptions, memories, and emotional attachment to the scene in question. In working with the defunct musical community that cohered between 1977 and 1982 on Hollywood's Sunset Strip, I found that online social networking sites can function as effective platforms for contacting former scene members and engaging with them as historical musical actors. Scene participants were already actively re-forming their scene community in online social networking spaces. By privileging their online reconstruction and reenactment of the scene over the current iteration of the Sunset Strip music culture, historical participants are at present creating a simulacrum of their former scene. Their online self-constructions likewise reflect their identities as they were when the scene was thriving, representing an act of embodied remembering. Engaging with constructions of self online (Nakamura 2002; Westlake 2008), the process of conducting internet ethnography on musical communities (Lysloff 2003; B. Wilson 2006), and simulacra (Baudrillard 2010), I will analyze Facebook's utility as a tool of historical ethnomusicology and explore how former scene participants use this online platform to restructure their former community and their past scene selves.

**Tormod Anundsen (University of Agder, Norway): Transcending tradition - the composer and the traditional performer**

Abstract:

This paper will be developed to a chapter in my PhD dissertation (due 2011). It analyses the practice of one of my principal research participants, Kossa Diomandé; an Ivorian-born drummer, singer and dancer. The overall scope of the dissertation is to discuss the role of immigrant musicians on the Norwegian popular music scene, particularly African immigrants. The dissertation analyses how de-contextualized performers are re-contextualized onto particular musical scenes and representations in Norway, thus highlighting and disseminating particular discourses on otherness and diaspora.

I argue that Kossa Diomandé acts in a role that he has developed through his many years as a musician in Norway. That is the role of the “artist”; the professional stage and studio musician, the composer, the material artist in the sense that musical material – such as traditional songs from his country of origin – become raw material for musical treatment. This way he moves from “tradition” to a different kind of musical professionalism.

Yet, his de-contextualized practice is re-contextualized within certain discourses of “tradition”, such as World Music representations and scenes. This is particularly highlighted at a Norwegian folk music festival where Kossa delivers a commissioned work, acting as the festival composer and headline. The paper goes into rehearsals and performance, all the way to the rendering of the performance in a TV production from the festival on national television, where he comes across very strongly as a “traditional” performer. The paper offers a critical analysis on the dominant discourse of “tradition” in representations of African music.

**Joshua Brown (UC Riverside): Performing Pastness: Structural and Historical Continuities in Flamenco and the Morón Style**

Abstract:

Flamenco music in southern Spain has long been the subject of highly contentious debates regarding tradition, modernity and authenticity. Such controversies are rooted in histories distinguished by competing approaches to race, social class and stylistic orthodoxy. Traditions in flamenco are constantly re-presented and remade through the shared use of palos (song-types) and melodic statements known as falsetas. In this paper, I illustrate how flamenco palos and falsetas function as mechanisms of historical continuity and are used to bring attention, and inscribe new meanings, to the music of earlier artists. This study focuses specifically on the Morón style, its architect, Diego del Gator, and its recent disciples in the group Son de la Frontera. The latter group consistently drew attention to flamenco’s capacity to conduct ongoing dialogues between intersecting temporalities, personalities and localities. I will address the ways in which conceptions of the past affected the output of these contemporary flamenco artists. Flamenco is classified into palos that provide melodic, rhythmic and poetic structures for artists to follow. Such structures in flamenco give rise to endless exchanges in which temporalities converge and traditional modes of expression are accentuated and maintained. Palos are distinguished by their places of origin and leading interpreters. In this way, flamenco engages in continuous dialogues with peoples, places and practices from both past and present. My aim is to examine how such dialogues are purposefully imbued with ritual, symbolic and ideological functions (Hobsbawm 1983: 3).

**Jason Busniewski (UC Santa Barbara): Fascination and Cultural Ferment in Early British India**

Abstract:

This paper explores a period of extensive and creative mixture in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century India, when many Indians and Europeans crossed cultural and musical boundaries in a spirit of open-mindedness that differed significantly from later Victorian-era attitudes. I examine two historical case studies that illustrate various ways in which the colonial experience influenced and transformed both European and Indian musics: first, the experimentation with and adoption of European instruments and musical styles by Indian musicians like Muthuswami Dikshitar and his brother Baluswami; and secondly, the European study and transcription of Indian music in cities like Lucknow, which became the basis for later popular songs in Britain. By examining some of the musical products that have resulted from the colonial encounter, I suggest new perspectives on the productive contexts of colonialism as a cultural environment. Pieces of music like the European-style *nottuswara sahitayas* of Muthuswami Dikshitar, which include both newly-composed melodies and borrowed tunes from Ireland, Scotland, England, and France fitted with devotional Sanskrit lyrics, and the attempt by British musicians to transcribe Indian genres like *tarana* for performance on the harpsichord argue for an understanding of the colonial encounter as a complex series of relationships and interactions in which the culture and musics of both the colonizer and the colonized become mutually influential. These multifarious histories enrich our understanding of British colonialism in India, not only as a set of relationships of power and domination, but also as an aesthetic context infused with mutual fascination and cultural creativity.

**Randy M. Drake (UC Santa Barbara): Challenging Gender Identity in Jazz: The Trans Artistry of Jennifer Leitham**

Abstract:

From its earliest beginnings, heterosexual males have overwhelmingly dominated jazz music. Yet in contrast to this position of identity, there are musicians who execute, advance, and provide contrast to jazz via the margins of the jazz community. Women jazz musicians are increasingly finding their way into jazz discourse. A further marginalized group of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) musicians also inhabit the world of jazz. Their stories cannot be found or heard in mainstream discourse.

This paper is an introduction to transgender identity in jazz through the musical life of Jennifer Leitham, an American jazz bassist, vocalist, composer, and educator, born in 1953 as John Leitham. The objective of this paper is to demonstrate how Leitham has challenged gender identity in jazz and how she is breaking new ground for future marginalized artists. By focusing on her adolescent and male-to-female transition years, the paper surveys Leitham's relative acceptance and rejection in the jazz mainstream; her transgender identity and the male dominated hierarchy of jazz; and complications inherent in Leitham's identity, not only relative to the jazz community, but also as a transgender individual who must negotiate identity amongst a prominent dichotomy of masculine/feminine gender classifications.

A brief survey of gender identity studies related to jazz is included as is Leitham's own personal journey of identity in the jazz world. By providing a platform for Leitham to tell her story, this

paper demonstrates and advocates for a better understanding of identity in the jazz world.

**Janice Foy (Independent scholar): Flamenco Fire!: Discussion/Performance**

Abstract:

Flamenco Fire! will discuss how the "blueprint" for choreography to a solo 'cello piece called, "Echo Serenade", by Argentinian 'cellist Ennio Bolognini, came together and eventually led to other collaborative endeavors. I will highlight 'cello techniques in "Echo Serenade" such as left hand pizzicato and rolled chords which emulate the guitar. Also, Bolognini's effectively placed rhythmic patterns performed *collegno battuto* (bowstick) coupled with dramatic mood changes effectively conjure up the presence of a flamenco dancer. This will lead into flamenco dancer Jani Quintero's discussion on how she worked through a successful choreography. All this technique is great, but without a collective "duende" (heart), or a passionate unfettered spontaneous style of performance, the tradition of flamenco *cante* would be lost. We concur that the art of Flamenco lives on only when the artists go beyond technique and perform as though creating "on the spot"!. We will conclude with our performance of "Echo Serenade", a 4.5 minute piece.

**Lillie Gordon (UC Santa Barbara): An Instrument of Modernity: Violin Players Negotiating the Colonial Encounter in Egypt**

Abstract:

The colonial encounter has played a pivotal role in the creation of modernities throughout the world (Mitchell 2000). Musically, periods of encounter contained negotiations in which players sought to demonstrate national identities, and cosmopolitan, often viewed as European, modernities. Over the past 150 years, Arab music in Egypt has undergone major changes, many of which relate to European colonialism, including the introduction and establishment of the violin as one of Arab music's principle instruments. Adopted from Europeans in the second half of the 19th century, the violin came to dominate the large music ensembles of the mid 20th century, and now features more prominently in contemporary popular music recordings than Arab instruments. Beyond creating audible changes, the violin provided and continues to form a bridge between European and Arab music, providing a visual and symbolic link. Based on over a year of ethnographic fieldwork in Cairo, and historical research on past performers and media, I argue that the violin acts as a key tool and symbol of modernity in 20th century Egyptian music. I use three players, expressing themselves through print, film, and recording technologies respectively, to show how the violin's discursive connection to the "local" and tradition, as well as the "modern" and Europe, has made it a powerful tool in the creation of a cosmopolitan present linked with the past. My ethnographic work shows how the instrument's use by players and composers continues to mirror and forward the production of modernity in postcolonial Egypt.

**Meghan Hynson (UC Los Angeles): The Spirit of Change in the Kirtan Culture of Los Angeles**

Abstract:

For centuries, the devotional chanting practice known as kirtan has flourished throughout India, especially among Hindus and Sikhs. Over the past few decades, kirtan has moved beyond India's borders and has become popular among American practitioners of yoga. This is especially so in what has often been called the epicenter for yoga and kirtan, Los Angeles. The performance of kirtan amongst LA-based practitioners has become a diverse and eclectic practice and has not been without criticism from kirtan traditionalists; however, many argue that kirtan is just as sacred and perhaps even more powerful today than it ever has been.

With this dichotomy of opinions as a central point of focus, this paper presents an ethnography project on the kirtan culture of Los Angeles. The number of musical transformations that kirtan has undergone is simultaneously explored alongside the ideology or spirit justifying these innovations. Through a multilayered research methodology consisting of interviews, documentation of kirtan performances, and reference to academic works, it is revealed that the spirit of kirtan is one that not only advocates these changes, but has also transformed the practice into a popular and burgeoning musical genre. Festivals such as Bhaktifest, or the "Woodstock of Devotion," serve as a testament to how deeply kirtan is penetrating American society. Inspired by the theory of anomie developed by Durkheim, I attribute the rise of kirtan to its ability to encourage common ideals within society, paralleling the energy, union, and inspiration written about in Timothy Taylor's work on Goa trance.

**Scott Marcus (chair), Jason Gabriel, Lillie Gordon, James Grippo, Phil Murphy, Tess Popper (UC Santa Barbara): At the Invitation of the Egyptian Ministry of Culture: A Roundtable Discussion of Issues Raised by the UCSB's Middle East Ensemble's July 2010 Trip to Egypt**

Abstract:

The UCSB Middle East Ensemble was invited by the Egyptian government's Ministry of Culture to give a series of concerts in Egypt in July 2010. With a group of 54 musicians, singers, and dancers, the ensemble presented nine concerts over a two-week period, the highlight being four performances at the Cairo Opera House, the premier performance venue in Egypt, with additional performances at Cairo University and in the cities of Ismailia, Helwan, and Beni Suef.

Our six-member panel addresses a number of issues that this trip has raised. Seeking historical contextualization for the tour, we begin by analyzing the long-standing function of the Opera House as a symbol of Egypt's reaching out to the West. We seek to explain how the tour came about by considering the ensemble's remarkably varied repertoire. Next, questioning why the tour happened and drawing on a series of interviews conducted with audience members immediately after many of our concerts, we seek to understand levels of cultural and political capital that different organizations and groups of people in Egypt accrued from the tour. Additionally, we ask about the benefits gained by those in the ensemble and also by community members in the greater Santa Barbara area. Finally, we address the issue of how we intend to

keep the project going into the future with the creation of a documentary film based on the recorded interviews and also extensive concert footage.

**Elizabeth McLean Macy (UC Los Angeles): Writing Bali: Travel Memoirs and Tourist Consumption as Personified Through Eat, Pray, Love**

Abstract:

International tourist arrivals on the island of Bali for 2010 reached a record 2.5 million, exceeding their target by 200,000 people. According to Ida Bagus Subhiksu, head of the Bali Tourism Office, the increase in arrivals (from 2.2 million in 2009) can in part be attributed to the success and popularity of Elizabeth Gilbert's memoir (now a feature film starring Julia Roberts), *Eat, Pray, Love*. Raising Bali's international profile and inspiring thousands of middle-aged women to lead their own journey to self-discovery in Indonesia, the publication of Gilbert's book coincided with the post-disaster tourism recovery.

Beginning in the early 20th century, cultural tourism was set in place to both advance the Indonesian economy and to serve as the backbone of Bali's economy. Throughout the island Bali's unique arts, music, and religion is intertwined with commodification brought about through tourism and perpetuated by orientalist beliefs targeted at the island itself. Tourists in search of experiential vacations travel to Bali in pursuit of cultural capital—the very thing portrayed in countless tourist stories and recollections. This paper addresses the images and ideas personified by travel memoirs, texts, and personal accounts of Bali, with particular focus paid to the 2006 memoir *Eat, Pray, Love: One Woman's Search for Everything Across Italy, India and Indonesia*.

**Philip Murphy (UC Santa Barbara): Sufi Music in the World, a Sufi Musician in Morocco: Universal Spirituality and Local Religion**

Abstract:

The world music market is saturated with recordings of Islamic and Sufi music from many different parts of the world. These global recordings travel far and wide and provide opportunities for consumers to experience a world religion through world music. However, these recordings are frequently de-Islamicized and de-localized in order to present the music as generally spiritual, and therefore more open to interpretation and ownership. While transforming local Islamic music into global spiritual music can provide a way to promote tolerance, understanding and global connectedness, it also serves as a way to market the music to a wider audience and to transfer ownership from the music makers to the consumers. This is connected to a larger global project in which Sufism has been, and continues to be, harnessed to present a non-threatening version of Islam compatible with Euro-American ideas of modernity and democracy.

In this paper I compare world music recordings of Moroccan Sufi music, produced in Europe and the United States, with Moroccan Sufi music as it is performed and theorized by a musician and orchestra leader in Fez, Morocco. I show how the discrepancy between the two versions reflect

understandings of Sufism and Islam that stem from the work of early colonial and Orientalist scholars. Drawing on the work of the ethnomusicologist Philip Bohlman and my own fieldwork I show how Sufi music in Fez can emphasize Islam and Morocco in specific and deliberate ways, while resisting the above-mentioned appropriation of Sufism and Sufi music.

### **Erin Putnam (UC Santa Barbara): Cuíca and Cultural Capital: Generation Gaps in Bossa Nova Listeners**

Abstract:

Generational gaps exist in the perception of music, gaps which in turn lead to various different habits of consumption and employment of music amongst different age groups. The same can be said even when those groups are perhaps listening to similar music. This paper seeks to prove that the different generational experiences of baby boomers and those in the Y generation contribute to divergent perceptions and utilizations of bossa nova and similar genres such as samba and Brazilian jazz, with a focus on audiences in California. While a certain elitism and desire to accumulate and display cultural capital exist on both sides of this gap, evidence also points to the older generation's participation in virtual tourism more so than the younger. This reification of sounds thought to represent a regional style are consumed as a means to access ideas of the "exotic" or sometimes even the nostalgic, imaginings which appear to be less of a factor in generation Y's consumption. Both sides of this gap attach a degree of cultural capital based upon obscurity to these genres, however the manner of obscurity is different, with younger listeners appearing to value the fact that Brazilian music is listened to by few in their age group and therefore requires a much more active role in finding recordings and forming opinions. While these forms of perception and consumption differ across generational lines, ultimately, both are based to some degree upon the distinction that is conferred by obscurity and removal.

### **Gibb Schreffler (UC Santa Barbara): Ethnic Choices in the Presentation of Chanties: A Study in Repertoire**

Abstract:

The genre of maritime work-songs known as chanties was born in the first half of the 19th century primarily out of African-American work-song practices. Its developing repertoire was fed by the coded-as-Black minstrel songs of the day, which were laid upon a distinctive call and response structure that was eventually adopted as a useful labor tool aboard American merchant ships. With time, chanties became the shared genre of deepwater seamen of varied ethnic and national backgrounds. Nonetheless, throughout the 19th century chanty performers and documenters retained an African-American association with chanties that acknowledged African-American cultural origins and agency. British vessels were late to adopt the practice of chanty-singing, but the persistence of things maritime in concepts of British identity in the early 20th century meant that chanties were remembered with nostalgia after their practical function had ceased. Subsequently, the mid-20th century Anglophile folk music revival adopted chanties



to represent that which was considered essentially and typically British. However, this profound shift in mainstream perception of the cultural associations of chanties was not limited to the images of performers. The manner of singing, the lyrics, and the interpretive stories behind each song were reconstituted and, as a result, they corroborated these perceptions. This paper examines the historical trajectories of two well known pieces of chanty repertoire to illustrate the sort of atomic changes, resulting from choices in representation that, combined, have ultimately resulted in marginalizing African-American associations with the genre.

**SEMSCHC Student Concerns Committee:** Roundtable Discussion: *Ethnomusicologists and the Philosophy of Higher Education in Contemporary American Universities*

Jason Busniewski (UC Santa Barbara), Scott Marcus (UC Santa Barbara), Tim Cooley (UC Santa Barbara), Supeena Insee Adler (UC Riverside).

Abstract:

In the current climate of economic turmoil and budget cutbacks, colleges and universities are taking a hard look at their curricula and the current shape of American higher education. Among the issues that professors and administrators must face are the tension between a broad liberal arts education and academic specialization of undergraduate students and the pressure to produce measurable results. Within this set of circumstances ethnomusicologists must ask what our discipline adds to the intellectual ferment and educational mission of the university, both in terms of socio-cultural analysis and the teaching and performance of music itself. We believe that ethnomusicology has much to offer students throughout the university, yet we face a continuing task of articulating its value. What does it mean to get or provide an education? How do we approach teaching students who may or may not be music majors? Conceptualizing a philosophy of higher education is crucial, not only for current faculty, but perhaps even more so for graduate students facing the prospect of entering a tight job market. We invite a panel of faculty and graduate students to discuss these issues from a variety of educational and performance perspectives, as teaching assistants, professors, leaders of performance ensembles, and administrators.

**Aaron Singer (UC Riverside):** Shima Uta: Localization and Exotification of Okinawan Music in Diaspora

Abstract:

Shima Uta is one of the most recognized and popular songs in Okinawa, Japan, and among Okinawan diasporic communities around the world. The song itself, however, does not originate from Okinawa, nor from Okinawans, but rather from a mainland Japanese rock band called The Boom. Shima Uta exotifies Okinawa as an idealized tropical paradise untouched by modernity, re-enforcing a long-held Japanese stereotype of the region. Despite this, many Okinawans have embraced the tune, which offers a catchy melody and prominently features the Okinawan sanshin, the three-stringed, snake-skin adorned precursor to the Japanese shamisen. The song is arguably more popular abroad, particularly in the Okinawan diasporic communities. To these

people, the song offers a romanticized portrayal of the islands they still consider to be their homeland and the source of their cultural heritage. The song has also gained popularity amongst the non-Okinawan, and even non-Japanese members of host countries. For example, in Jakarta, Indonesia, the song has been adapted to bamboo angklung instruments by the Jakarta Sanshin Club, a group of Indonesians who play Okinawan music. It also became Argentina's theme song during their bid for the World Cup in 2002. Localization often occurs in one form or another in regions with diasporic communities. Drawing from Diana Taylor's ideas about performance as shared memory, this paper examines the utility and meanings of Shima Uta in Indonesia and Argentina and how they reflect and inform Okinawan diasporic cultural identity.

**Lauren Weintraub Stoebel (CU New York): Rethinking Rural/Urban: Irish Traditional Music and “Musical Community” in Contemporary Dublin**

Abstract:

Recent scholarship on Irish traditional music has begun to critique popular narratives about the role of place, space, and geography in the history Irish traditional music – from the concept of “regional style,” to the role of music in Irish cultural nationalism, to the symbolism of the rural landscape in narratives surrounding traditional music. Part of this process of scholarly exploration necessarily involves a re-evaluation of the prominence of certain predominantly rural areas of the West in the symbolic construction of the history of traditional music in Ireland. This paper takes a complimentary approach by focusing instead on the performance of traditional music in a contemporary urban environment. Using ethnomusicologists' theoretical explorations of urban musical performance as a starting point, I will briefly trace some of the historical issues surrounding the performance of traditional music in Dublin, setting the stage for a more in-depth ethnographic exploration of some of the manifestations of “musical community” in the city today. My intention is to move beyond the more commonly-told stories of bourgeois revivalist musicians or urban musicians finding their musical roots in a rural homeland – stories that reinforce an overly strict distinction between rural and urban musical experiences. This paper instead examines the fluid roles of prominent individuals and institutions and the creative use of urban spaces in the everyday creation and dissolution of musical life in contemporary Dublin.

**Markus Verne (UC Los Angeles): Why Metal? Struggling with the presence of a popular music genre in the highlands of Madagascar**

Abstract:

Antananarivo, Madagascar's capital, hosts a considerable Metal scene: At least thirty well known metal bands perform every now and then in different locations all over the city, while far more bands meet on a regular basis in numerous rehearsal studios to play and practice their songs. At concerts, hundreds of fans bang their heads, a weekly TV show is exclusively dedicated to metal, shops all over Antananarivo sell the latest CDs, VCDs and DVDs from both local and international metal bands, an organization was founded to help young metal bands and promote metal in Madagascar and, in the form of long hair and black metal T-shirts, the aesthetics of

metal even form part of the cities everyday visual landscape.

In my paper, I will deal with the question why, in the highlands of Madagascar, metal music is loved by so many people of different age and gender. Tracing the music's local history and asking for identity politics involved, I will argue that approaching metal – and popular music more generally – without taking into account aesthetic considerations risks missing the point when it comes to understanding its role in specific historical conditions.

**Vivek Virani (UC Los Angeles): Innovation and Unconsciousness: Poly-Meter in Solo Tabla Compositions of Suresh Talwalkar**

Abstract:

Scholarship of tabla performance and tradition has deeply explored the emergence of gharana lineages and regional styles of playing, the classification of compositions, and the format of a solo performance, but few attempts have been made at detailed analysis of individual compositions and their unique properties. This paper therefore concerns itself with a single compositional element, specifically the use of poly-meter by tabla artist Suresh Talwalkar. This characteristic, which Talwalkar terms “murchana,” or unconsciousness, is described through an analysis of two rela compositions by Talwalkar. The analysis draws on my experience studying tabla with Talwalkar in India, and describes the rhythmic structure of the compositions as well as the paradigms used to construct their poly-meter and the effects this creates. This paper also addresses how these compositions diverge from the mainstream of tabla performance, due to influence from South Indian classical music, and Talwalkar's own aesthetic ideas and innovative performance style. Finally, the paper addresses the nomenclature of the primary compositional element: why is poly-meter called “unconsciousness,” and what does this reveal about the way the composer relates to the composition and its performance? The structural analysis of the compositions and the discussion of their innovative presentation are used to answer these questions, and to describe Talwalkar's spiritually focused approach to a tabla solo. This article thereby aims to present contemporary ideas in tabla performance and philosophy, and to motivate future in-depth analysis of tabla compositions.

**Dave Wilson (UC Los Angeles): A New Sun for Macedonia: National Identity and Semiotic Meaning in the Life and Death of Toshe Proeski**

Abstract:

Macedonian pop singer Toshe Proeski began his career in the late 1990s as a teenage vocal prodigy; by the time of his 2007 death at twenty-six, he had emerged as arguably the most recognizable public figure in Macedonia. For many reasons, including his talent and engaging personality, Toshe achieved iconic status during his life and increasingly so after his death, his persona and music acquiring meaning as symbols of hope for affirmation and recognition of Macedonia's national identity. Toshe's 2006 album of traditional Macedonian songs, Bozhilak (Rainbow), a departure from his standard pop music, solidified his position as a symbol of

Macedonia, entwining his identity with that of the nation through associations with traditional songs and their specific images, notably that of the sun, a significant and contested national symbol central in Macedonia's national anthem and on its flag. The contested nature of such symbols indicates the challenges to cultural legitimacy by Macedonia's geographical neighbors, an ongoing real and perceived threat to national identity which has resulted in an increasing desire among Macedonians to assert and articulate a distinct ethnic Macedonian national identity, often at the expense (and provocation) of ethnic minorities. Through the music and persona of Toshe Proeski and drawing from media reports, cultural texts, informal field observation and interviews, this paper examines how musical artists and their music can acquire complex and diverse semiotic meanings through associations with both established and disputed symbols, and how these new musical symbols can be appropriated towards political and nationalistic ends.

**Iris Yellum (UC Los Angeles): Construction and Negotiation of Musical Identity in Contemporary Tabla Performance in Los Angeles**

Abstract:

This study explores the contemporary performance of the North Indian classical drum set tabla in Los Angeles. I will focus on three L.A.-based tabla performers active in classical and non-classical settings, in particular jazz fusion. I will consider how the tabla performer negotiates classical and non-classical genres musically, psychologically and socially.

The frequent stylistic versatility of U.S.-based Hindustani classical musicians is the impetus for my research. Through examining the preconditions for this development of versatility, and further the versatility itself, I will ultimately address the complex navigations of the tabla performer in stylistically collaborative settings. How does the classical tabla performer engage with jazz musicians, return to classical music, and maintain a musical identity? Is there a bifurcation to the approach to music, or a convergence of approaches where experiences of both genres inform each other? By working with tabla players of different backgrounds and musical training, I will have insight into possible answers to the above questions.

Precedents for hybridizing Indian art with Western genres were set in the twentieth century by the work of Uday Shankar, Ravi Shankar, and Zakir Hussain. Working with a background of classical tabla, the L.A.-based performers similarly appear in a variety of genres. Contemporary tabla performance in Los Angeles has a unique variety of local and global influences that I will examine through interviews with stylistically versatile tabla players, observation of their concerts, and a survey of the more global context of their music.

.....

.....